

Brussels, 21 June 2010
D(2010)1036

Dear President, 

I would like to inform you of a number of reforms I have introduced and which should help to improve the Commission's communication. As a start, since you have entrusted me with the responsibility for communication, I have reorganised DG COMM to better equip it for its task to provide a service to the College and all DGs for their communication activities.

Following a discussion with the Spokesperson's Service on the most pressing operational communication needs, the following improvements in the service provided by DG COMM have been introduced during the first five months of this Commission:

1. Earlier and easier information on the press

Press clippings, as well as summaries of audiovisual media, are now available every morning at 08.45hrs for SPP and cabinets, both on-line (Newsroom on MyIntracomm) and on paper, in time to allow for early decisions on "Lines to Take". It is now also possible for Commission officials to call up press clippings digitally by country and by subject.

2. Teleprompting

Teleprompters have now been installed in the press room and are presently being tested. They should facilitate and professionalise the delivery of speeches and detailed press conferences by Commissioners and Spokespeople.

3. A team of speechwriters

A dedicated team of 4 speechwriters has been created in DG COMM, who will work with your own speechwriters and those in the DGs, to draft master speeches for Commissioners and senior level civil servants on cross cutting issues, such as the Europe 2020 strategy, the financial crisis, the Lisbon Treaty or the EU's Consumer Policy.

4. Transcripts of Press conferences

After having tested electronic transcription of press conferences and finding out that it was not successful, DG COMM will launch a tender procedure for a professional transcript service, which should be operational in early 2011. This service will ensure written transcripts of important press conferences and statements very shortly after their delivery in the language in which they were made.

Mr José Manuel Barroso
President of the European Commission
BERL 13/057

5. Websites of the President and Commissioners

A dedicated team of 8 persons has been set up in DG COMM to keep your website and that of fellow Commissioners up-to-date in real time (following the best practice already installed by me at DG INFSO during the previous mandate). The team foresees a permanence ensuring a 24 hour service. Furthermore, the websites of all Commissioners are now harmonised following a common template developed by DG COMM.

6. SMS service

DG COMM has developed an SMS sender web application (<http://s-comm-iss-p1:8001/smssender/>) which can now be used by the Spokesperson's Service to inform journalists expediently of important developments.

7. A dedicated EbS crew for the President

DG COMM will recruit 2 EbS producers who will in future travel with you, on request, and who will direct local EbS crews. Given the requirements of the recruitment procedure (call for tender); this service will be operational as from spring 2011. In the meantime, a trial/preparatory phase will be launched for a number of missions. On request, an internal "Producer" can accompany you on some of your missions (subject to mission budget availability). 2 clips editors will be in post soon to strengthen your video production. Of course, this service could be extended to important and media-sensitive missions by other Commissioners (e.g. a mission by Olli Rehn to Athens in the next few weeks).

8. Enable journalists to travel with the President or Commissioners to important meetings abroad

Before the summer, I intend to submit to the College a financing decision and operational guidelines to enable the Commission to take in charge some of the costs of journalists travelling with you or fellow Commissioners to important meetings abroad. The new system is expected to be operational in October.

9. A dedicated photographer for the President on permanent call

The photographers' service will be strengthened with the recruitment of 2 more photographers to ensure a 24 hour service for you. They will be operational very soon if they are attached to your Cabinet, otherwise a longer delay (call for tender) will be needed to recruit them (spring 2011).

10. Monitoring of blogs and social networking sites and instant rebuttal

Automated blog monitoring is now available via the new EMM "European blog monitoring" tool on the MyIntracomm News Portal. Users can subscribe to email alerts based on key words. Fast and effective rebuttal is organised by the SPP with the help of the responsible services. In addition, I have asked DG COMM to set up a network of 10-15 social media experts across the Commission to ensure a targeted use of social media (such as Facebook or Twitter) for the Commission's communication purposes.

11. Graphic designers for backdrops, logos, press packages or power point presentations for important President initiatives/Commission decisions

The team of graphic designers in DG COMM will be strengthened to include 3 persons. The new team will be operational from September. They will help with the professional presentation of important Commission policy messages (such as Europe 2020).

12. Streamlining of logos

I have asked DG COMM to streamline the multitude of logos currently used by Commission services. This will lead to a set of guidelines for all services before summer. The use of the European flag together with the existing logos will become the rule.

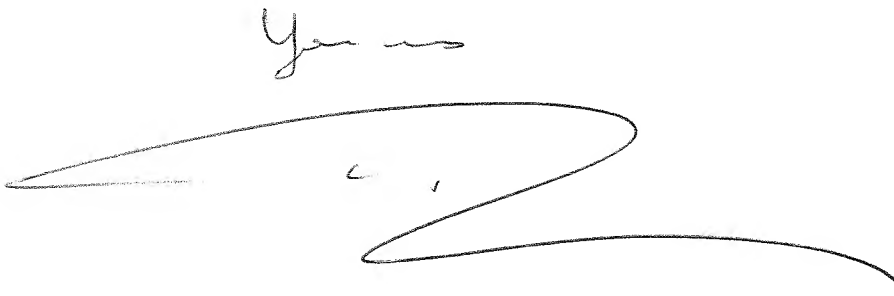
13. Branding

DG COMM will launch before the summer a more fully fledged branding operation for the Commission to strengthen and streamline our corporate image on the basis of the European flag.

14. Streamlining of networks

On my request, DG COMM is working on the streamlining of the multitude of Commission networks. It has started with a harmonisation of their visual identity. A next step will be to bring them together under one "umbrella", to create a single entry port for citizens requesting information about the EU, as proposed in the 2008 Lamassoure report. I intend to launch this single entry port in October on the occasion of the adoption by the College of the Citizenship Report which you called for in your policy guidelines last year.

The aforementioned actions should constitute a first but certainly not the last step towards improving the communication efforts of the Commission. If you allow me, I would be prepared to make a 10 minute presentation at the College seminar in September to illustrate to colleagues how they can make best use of the communication tools now available under the reformed system and to ask them about their ideas for further developing and strengthening the service-oriented nature of DG COMM for the whole Commission.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Laitenberger', followed by a large, stylized, sweeping flourish that extends across the width of the page.

Cc: J. Laitenberger, C. Day, C. Sørensen, F. Le Bail, K. Doens,
P. Ahrenkilde Hansen, S. Bouygues